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NUTRITION COMMITTEE NEWS

For exchange of information on nutrition education and school lunch activities.

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HOW PARTICIPANTS EVALUATED NUTRITION EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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Participants in the Nutrition Education Conference (NEC), Washington, D. C., April 1 to 3, 1957, on three separate occasions gave their evaluation of the meetings. The first two evaluations, made during the conference, were unsigned; the third, given several months later, was signed. Brief reports on the why and how of the evaluations and what they told are given in this issue for use of planners of other conferences—national, State, or local.

The program and content of the meetings are given in Proceedings of Nutrition Education Conference, USDA, Misc. Pub. No. 745, 1958.

On-the-Spot Evaluations

Toward the end of the first work-study session (second morning of the conference) members of each group rated their discussion group, listed its outstanding strengths, and told what changes they would like. Each group had a summarizer of evaluations who shared results of her summary first with her group leader and then with other members when the group reconvened. Purpose of this evaluation was to improve the discussions to follow.

The second evaluation, in which participants stated their degree of satisfaction with the conference, its strengths and weaknesses, and their plans to share the conference back home, was in two parts. The first and major part was done in late afternoon of the second day. On the third day a short supplementary form was filled at the luncheon which closed the conference.

In general participants liked the Nutrition Education Conference. Here is how their 131 ratings registered at the end of the second day: Very satisfied, 25; quite satisfied, 93; so-so, 11; and somewhat dissatisfied, 2.

This Issue

The 1957 Conference on Nutrition Education was planned by many persons with varied competences in nutrition and education. Several evaluations, one of them made nearly a year after the conference, told the planners the ways in which they had and had not sensed and served needs of the 200 participants. As promised in the May-June 1957 issue of NCN which covered NEC, this issue reports on the evaluations of the conference. This useful information is now being shared with NCN readers, many of whom on occasion contribute to the planning of meetings.

Strengths.—Over half of the evaluators voluntarily commented on the interesting talks made at the first day's general sessions. Each talk was rated "tops" by some of the audience. There seemed to be general agreement that it was a good idea to start by presenting basic information on what we know about *where people are in dietary practices* and about *how to help people change to better food practices.*

Group discussion was selected for special praise by more than 40 percent of the respondents. Opportunity to tell and hear about each other's experiences, ideas, needs, interests, problems, and methods was considered

one of the big returns for coming to the conference. Participants liked thinking together on common problems in nutrition education in small groups with workers from their own and related disciplines, from their own and different areas of the country. One person wrote, "The discussion groups might not have met individual needs, but they did involve everyone, and this is basic."

The dramatic technique of using dialogue and flannel board to demonstrate the stages that people go through in moving from an idea to social action, and to report the summary of what was said in the 12 work-study groups was well received.

A large number of people considered the conference well planned. Participants liked a combination of listening to the experts, working in study groups with peers and experts, learning a fairly new way (dialogue) of using a familiar teaching technique (flannel board), and having a chance at the closing luncheon to start thinking through with others from back home how to use conference ideas in their own areas. The fairly unhurried pace of the conference program, the starting and closing of program events on schedule, and the physical facilities seemed to please many.

Weaknesses.—Evaluators mentioned some weaknesses and suggested how they might have been averted.

Discussion groups were criticized more than any other segment of the conference. Most frequent criticisms were that a whole day proved too long to devote to discussion and that groups covered too general a topic or too many problem areas for the time allowed.

Too little attention may have been paid to the evaluations made in some of the work-study groups at their first session. Another time, perhaps during orientation, group leaders and participants might be prepared to make more constructive use of findings from such a promising type of evaluation. Many participants suggested that it might have been better to intersperse papers and discussion and to assign a specific problem to each group. Other types of criticism represented the opinion of very few.

Sharing the Conference Back Home. — Although some participants were not ready to say how they might share the conference with folks back home, most participants had some general ideas. These are not summarized here since participants' intentions coincided well with their actions reported in post-meeting evaluations.

Post-Meeting Evaluations

In the third evaluation, 10 or 11 months after the conference, primary effort was to find out uses made of the information and ideas received at the conference and intentions for further uses.

Who Responded? —Slightly more than a half of the 200 NEC participants filled and returned the post-meeting evaluation forms received with their copies of Conference Proceedings. Replies came from more than 30 States, the District of Columbia, Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. About a third of the returns were from workers in national agencies; another third, from workers in the States; and the other third was about evenly divided between local organizations and colleges and universities.

Professional interests of those who responded represented a good cross section of those who attended NEC (*see* NCN, May-June 1957). Areas of education, extension, public health and social welfare, and school lunch and dietetics were about equally represented; altogether they made up three-fourths of the respondents. The rest were primarily home economics and nutrition workers in research and industry with a very few from press and administrative positions.

What was "most helpful"?—The first morning has proven more helpful in the work of participants than any other part of the conference. At that time two talks were given on what is known today about family diets and principles of learning. An almost equal contribution was made by the first afternoon's symposium of four talks on nutrition education problems of different age groups. Discussion groups ranked third as *most helpful.* This summary of the evaluations seems to indicate that participants gained more from listening to the experts than from exchanging information with each other.

The talk on *Principles of Learning* was listed as *most helpful* far more often than any other one talk. This is of special interest to educators who continuously stress the importance of understanding how people learn. NEC planners had placed program emphasis on nutrition education, believing that more is known about what dietary needs are than about how to put facts about food and nutrition in clear, practical, and convincing language that conveys ideas resulting in action. The talk on *Family Diets Today* proved second in job usefulness; the demonstration of stages in the social action process, third.

Uses of information and ideas.—Many respondents expressed the feeling that the conference had increased their background of knowledge about needs and methods in nutrition education. They have used conference information and ideas most often as source material for their varied job responsibilities. NEC participants with enthusiasm have shared what they have learned with their coworkers, counterparts, and many other workers in nutrition, education, and related fields and with students and a large part of the general public. They believe that their new knowledge has helped them prepare

better talks, radio and television scripts, demonstrations, exhibits, publications, films, and other educational materials.

Among important actions mentioned as having been stimulated by the conference is a survey to learn more about nutrition programs in their State that was undertaken jointly by the Chicago Nutrition Association and the Illinois Nutrition Committee (*see* July-August 1958 NCN). Another is a series of 12 articles constituting a concise summary of what is known about food and nutrition. These articles started in the October 1957 issue of AMA's lay publication, *Today's Health*. The series was promoted by AMA's Council on Foods and Nutrition.

Followup conferences were held in Wyoming and in New England in May 1957. New Englanders started planning their conference long before NEC but felt attendance at the national meeting was helpful.

Further Uses Planned.—Respondents for the most part indicated that they intend to extend the uses already made of conference ideas and information.

The West Virginia Nutrition Council has announced plans for a 2-day conference on nutrition education in June 1959 at West Virginia University's Medical Center. The Texas Nutrition Committee also is planning a nutrition education conference; no date had been set at time of evaluation.

One State is reported to be organizing a State Nutrition Council.

AMA's Council on Food and Nutrition intends to encourage *Today's Health* to follow their present series of popular articles on food and nutrition with others. Also, AMA's Council is constructing a new exhibit on reducing for the lay public and is revising the one on food facts and fallacies.

Nutrition Education Promotion by ICNESL.—There were many responses to the question, What suggestions do you have that might assist the Interagency Committee on Nutrition Education and School Lunch (ICNESL) in further promoting nutrition education?" This was an open-end question and respondents were not necessarily aware of the scope and limitations of the functions ICNESL can undertake inasmuch as each of its members carries a full program of work in addition to her ICNESL responsibilities.

There is a great consistency in wants of conference participants which can be summarized for the most part under five headings. Some idea of the extent to which ICNESL can and does contribute to these wants is given below:

1. *Additional conferences at Federal level.*—It is likely that one or more conferences will be held in the future in response to felt need. Purposes to be served by another conference, theme and structure it should have, and "when" need to be explored. Evaluations of the 1957 and earlier national nutrition conferences as well as regional and State meetings will be taken into consideration in planning any future meeting.

2. *Assistance in planning conferences.*—ICNESL members as a committee can give certain types of consultation service to nutrition committees that are planning conferences for regions, States, and other communities. ICNESL wants to share its conference experience with others but of necessity usually confines its contribution to what can be done through correspondence. The efforts of ICNESL are often augmented by those of the Nutrition Programs Service of the Institute of Home Economics which provides secretariat service for ICNESL.

3. *Preparation and distribution of nutrition education materials.*—This is a very limited function of ICNESL.

ICNESL has developed a few pieces of material to which all of its member agencies have contributed. Two publications that were revised in 1958 are examples: (1) Selected References on Nutrition and School Lunch, and (2) Nutrition Activities of Agencies Represented on the Interagency Committee on Nutrition Education and School Lunch (*see* Materials, July-Aug. 1958, NCN). Both of these report information only about member agencies of ICNESL.

ICNESL upon request reviews material prepared by its member agencies. Most recently it offered suggestions to the Institute of Home Economics on preliminary drafts of the bulletin, *Essentials of An Adequate Diet.*

Sometimes ICNESL agencies cooperate on a publication such as the recently revised Children's Bureau publication, *Food Your Children Need,* which was prepared in cooperation with the Institute of Home Economics. Preparation of materials for special groups such as social workers, dentists, and physicians is outside the sphere of ICNESL activities. Its member agencies who work with these professional groups, however, prepare such materials. The packet of material on salt-restricted diets, recently prepared by USPHS in cooperation with interested organizations, is an example.

4. *Keeping nutrition workers informed.*—ICNESL makes some contributions along these lines. Plans are being made to prepare a supplement on visual aids to its recently revised publication on *Selected References on Nutrition and School Lunch.* When the supplement is ready NCN will announce its availability.

Other efforts are occasional institutes or national meetings on nutrition problems coupled with wide distribution of their proceedings and arrangements for annual meetings of nutrition committee members attending AHEA conventions. The latter has provided a new op-

portunity for exchange of experience and discussion of nutrition education programs.

NCN, to which ICNESL gives consultant service, provides a medium for exchange of information on nutrition education and school lunch.

5. *Combating misinformation.*—This big problem needs the vigilance and attention of all who are interested in the nutritional health of people. Besides the Food and Drug Administration, the Federal Trade Commission, and State, municipal, and other governmental agencies, many professional organizations are trying to promote truth in advertising on TV and radio, in the press, and from the platform, and to get better labeling of food and pharmaceuticals. At present, a committee with representation from AHEA, ADA, APHA, American Dental Association, and AMA's Council on Food and Nutrition is busy with this problem.

MATERIALS

Listing of these materials is for the information of readers and does not necessarily mean recommendation. Materials may be obtained from the addresses given. Symbols refer to—

GPO—Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

IDS—International Documents Service, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, N. Y.

USDA—Office of Information, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

NAS—National Academy of Sciences—National Research Council, Washington 25, D. C.

Dietary allowances

RECOMMENDED DIETARY ALLOWANCES. A report of the Food and Nutrition Board, 36 pp., rev. 1958, $1. NAS.

Food values

THE NUTRITIVE VALUE OF COOKED MEATS. R. M. Leverton and G. V. Odell. Okla. Agr. Expt. Sta., Oklahoma State Univ., Stillwater, Okla., MP-49, 90 pp., illus., 1958.

Nutrition facts

THE ROLE OF DIETARY FAT IN HUMAN HEALTH. Food and Nutr. Board. NAS-NRC Pub. No. 575, 32 pp., 1958. NAS. $1.

DIETARY FAT AND HUMAN HEALTH. Food and Nutr. Board. 8 pp., 1958. NAS.

Food enrichment

CEREAL ENRICHMENT IN PERSPECTIVE, 1958. The Committee on Cereals, Food and Nutr. Board. 20 pp., 1958. NAS.

Food management for families and individuals

FOOD FOR FITNESS. Picture Story No. 110, 1958. Leaflet, 4 pp., illus. Nutrition Programs Service, IHE, ARS, United States Department of Agriculture, Wash. 25, D. C.

BUDGET-WISE FAMILY MEALS—NUTRITIOUS TOO. Ohio Dept. Health (Columbus), 29 pp., 1958.

THE CHILD'S MEALS ARE FAMILY MEALS. M. S. Sweeny and M. Eichelberger. The Merrill-Palmer School, 71 Ferry Ave. E., Detroit 2, Mich., 16 pp., 1958.

Nutrition education

FOOD—FACTS AND FADS. G. Cook and M. Foley. Leaflet No. 308, Coop. Ext. Serv., Univ. of Mass., Amherst, Mass. 8 pp., 1958.

WHAT CONSUMERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FOOD STANDARDS. U. S. Dept. Health, Education, and Welfare, Food and Drug Admin. (Leaflet) 8 pp. 1958.

Food management for institutions

MEALS FOR ADULTS IN RESIDENT HOMES. Nutr. Sec., Mass. Dept. of Public Health, Rm. 612, 88 Broad St., Boston 10, Mass., 32 pp., illus.

OHIO DIET MANUAL FOR USE IN SMALL HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES. Ohio Dept. of Health, Columbus, Ohio, 46 pp., 1958.

FEEDING OLDER FOLKS . . . A FOOD GUIDE FOR BOARDING HOME OPERATORS. New Jersey State Dept. of Health, Trenton 25, N. J. N-D27, M 1880, 8 pp., illus.

FOOD SERVICE MANUAL FOR NURSING HOMES. Florida State Board of Health, Jacksonville, 42 pp., 1958.

Food and nutrition and expenditure surveys

FARM FAMILY SPENDING IN THE UNITED STATES. Some changes as indicated by recent U. S. Department of Agriculture expenditure surveys. USDA AIB No. 192 (Agr. Res. Serv.) 50 pp., illus., 1958, GPO, 30¢.

CONSUMPTION OF FOOD IN THE UNITED STATES 1909-52. USDA AH No. 62 Suppl. for 1957. Agr. Mar. Serv., 33 pp., 1958. GPO, 25¢.

HOME BAKING BY HOUSEHOLDS IN THE U. S.—BY REGION. USDA Household Food Consumption Survey Report No. 13. (Agr. Res. Serv. in cooperation with Agr. Mar. Serv.) 130 pp., 1958, GPO, 75¢.

FOOD USE AND GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT OF THE WIFE. Dorothy Dickins. Miss. Agr. Expt. Sta., State College, Bul. 558, 16 pp., 1958.

NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF 9-, 10-, and 11-YEAR-OLD PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN IN IOWA, KANSAS, AND OHIO. II. BLOOD FINDINGS. Ohio Agr. Expt. Sta. (Wooster) Res. Bul. 794. 63 pp., illus., 1957.

ASCORBIC ACID CONTENT OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES SERVED COLLEGE STUDENTS. R. E. Tucker, P. T. Brown and D. I. Hedrick. Rhode Island Agr. Expt. Sta. (Kingston) Bul. 331, 15 pp., illus., 1955.

Public Health Nutrition

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION SERVICES IN GEORGIA. Nutr. Sec., Ga. Dept. Pub. Health (Atlanta) 5 pp., 1958.

MAN AND HUNGER. WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS, NO. 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 82 pp., illus., 1957. IDS, single copy 25¢. 100 copies $15. (For teachers in secondary schools.)

Institute of Home Economics, Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Interagency Committee on Nutrition Education and School Lunch. (The printing of this publication has been approved by the Bureau of the Budget, July 27, 1955.)